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THE PALLIUM.

The word *pallium* has a great variety of meanings in both classical and ecclesiastical Latin. In the first century it was used at Rome to designate the characteristic vesture of the Greeks (HIMATION) in contradiction to the *toga*, the national costume of Latium. The pallium varied in size, as did the toga, according to the wealth and dignity of the wearer and the occasion of greater or less ceremony on which it was worn. By the Greeks it was regarded as the proper dress for ceremonial use.¹

In the time of Tertullian (?+230) the pallium seems to have been the distinctive dress of those devoted to serious studies, and on this account was adopted by the African Christians. His little volume *De Pallio* defends its use against those who had criticized him for adopting this recognized dress of philosophers.²

The use of the pallium as an ecclesiastical garment is variously explained. Some refer it to the head-band of the Jewish high-priest; others to the mantle worn by the Roman Emperor; and there are a few who declare its origin to be traceable to a mantle of St. Peter, which was symbolical of his office as Supreme Pastor. "To trace it to an investiture of the Emperor, to the ephod of the Jewish high-priest, or to a fabled mantle of St. Peter is entirely inadmissible. The correct view may be that the pallium was introduced as a liturgical badge of the pope, and it does not seem improbable that it was adopted in imitation of its counterpart, the pontifical OMOPHORION, already in vogue in the Eastern Church."³

We find mention for the first time of the ecclesiastical pallium in the West, during the pontificate of Pope Marcus (+351) who is said to have bestowed it upon the Bishop of Ostia as a special privilege, as usual consecrator of the pope. St. Symmachus conceded it to Caesarius the Bishop of Arles (498-514). Shortly afterwards, in the time of Pope Virgilius, Auxanius, one of the successors of Caesarius, besought that the use of the pallium might also be granted to him. During the time of Gregory the Great (590-614) this honor was conferred upon several bishops, one case being that of St. Augustine, Archbishop of Canterbury. It is a curious anomaly that the pallium, despite its avowed meaning and historical associations, remains to this day the most conspicuous object in the arms of the occupant of the See of Canterbury.⁴

The granting of the pallium in St. Gregory's time was already regarded as "an ancient custom." This we find expressed in the Pope's Epistle to Childebert, King of the Franks. The king had written to St. Gregory, re-

¹ MARRIOTT, *Vestiarius Christianum*, p. xii, London, 1868.

² See HAUCK, *Tertullians Leben und Schriften*, Erlangen, 1877.

³ BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, sec. iv, ch. iii, n. 8. Freiburg, 1907.

⁴ Cfr. DUCHESNE, *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, English translation, by McClure, p. 385. London, 1903. See THURSTON, art. *The Pallium*, in *The Month*, vol. lxxv, July, 1892.

questing that the pallium and vicarial authority from the Apostolic See (*vices apostolicae sedis*) might be conferred on Vigilius, Bishop of Arles. In writing to Vigilius and announcing his assent, St. Gregory speaks of sending him to the pallium as "an ancient custom."⁵

Quod vero in eis (sc. epistolis) juxta antiquum morem, usum palii ac vices apostolicae postulasti, absit ne aut transitoriae potestatis culmen, aut exterioris cultus ornamentum, in vicibus nostris ac palliis quaesisse te suspicer. Sed quia cunctis liquet unde in Galliarum regionibus fides sancta podierit, cum priscam consuetudinem apostolicae sedis fraternitas vestra repetit, qui aliud quam bona suboles ad sinum matris ecclesiae recurrit?

The pallium here mentioned is the pallium worn by archbishops. In St. Gregory's time this had already assumed that later form in which (with slight modifications only) it has ever since been retained. It was a stole-shaped white woolen band, draped over the shoulders with two lappets, one in front, the other behind, and was all but identical with the OMOPHORION of the Greek Church, such as is spoken of by St. Isidore of Pelusium in his Epistle to Herminus:⁶

The linen vestment with which the deacon ministers in the Holy Place, is a memorial of the humility of our Lord, in washing and in wiping dry, the feet of the disciples. But that which the bishop weareth on his shoulders, made not of linen but of wool signifieth the fleece of the sheep, for which, when it had wandered away, the Lord sought, and took it up on His own shoulders. For the bishop, being a type of Christ, fulfilleth Christ's work, and by the habit he wears setteth forth unto all that he who is set to bear the infirmities of the flock is a follower of the good and great Shepherd. And this do thou note carefully.

In those days the pallium was the distinctive mark of episcopal authority in full exercise; and when a pope, or a patriarch, was deposed his pallium was taken from him. Its use was not confined to archbishops or patriarchs in the East or in Gaul, for by the Gallican Rite the pallium was worn indiscriminately by all bishops, and it is conjectural as to whether or not they needed to be invested with it by their metropolitans or patriarchs. The Roman custom of reserving the pallium as a mark of honor for certain bishops seem to be only a modification of the primitive institution.⁷

Although originally derived from the same source as that of other bishops the papal pallium acquired gradually a more exalted significance and became the distinctive badge of archbishops with the exceptions of the

⁵ *Epistolarum ex registro Divi Gregorii*, lib. iv, ep. 2.

⁶ *Epist.* lib., i, cap., 136, in MARRIOTT, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

⁷ *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. DUCHESNE, vol. i, note 4. Paris, 1884-92.

Bishop of Ostia (the usual consecrator of the pope) and the Bishop of Ravenna, who occupied a special place in episcopal administration. The suffragan bishops of Rome had not the right to wear the pallium; for their position was more subordinate with regard to the pope than that of other bishops with regard to their metropolitans. They were obliged to come to Rome to be consecrated, and the consecration was performed by the pope alone, without the concurrence of other bishops. Like the African bishops, the bishops of South Italy seem to have occupied the position of important parish priests rather than that of rulers of dioceses.⁸

Gregory the Great regarded the bestowal of the pallium as a matter of very grave importance. He wrote to John, the occupant of the See of Ravenna (575-595), rebuking him for having introduced certain practices into his church, especially that of wearing the pallium outside the time of Mass and of parading it in public places. He says that no archbishop ever wore the pallium outside of Mass and that John could not be ignorant of this fact since the latter had expressly recognized this in letters to the Roman Pontiff. Gregory writes to him and repeats that the pallium ought only be worn during Mass and four times a year outside the church, during the celebration of the litanies.⁹

In view of this fact it seems surprising to find that every bishop in Gaul, in the sixth century, at least, had the right to wear the pallium. There is a decree of the Synod of Macon (581) which states that no bishop should presume to celebrate Mass without the pallium. This may possibly be explained in this way: The pallium had not the same signification to the Gallican bishops as it bears in the letter of St. Gregory; but, might denote another vestment, the *orarium*, which means a stole. That this word was sometimes employed in the sense of pallium is pointed out by Duchesne in his notes to the *Liber Pontificalis*, i, p. 481.¹⁰

From the early days of the eighth century we have abundant proofs of the agreement of Christendom not only as to the nature of the pallium but of its significance. That it was to be obtained from the Roman Pontiff was acknowledged in the General Synod of the Franks, held in 745 under the presidency of St. Boniface, and that it symbolized the fulness of the pontifical office is attested by the words of the Eighth General Synod.¹¹

Pope Nicholas I, in his answer to the Bulgarians ("Responsa Nicolai ad consulta Bulgarorum") directed to Prince Boris, in 863, states that an archbishop could not lawfully exercise any ecclesiastical function, except the celebration of the Mass, until he had received the pallium, thus establishing the fact that it symbolized dependence upon Rome. The same idea is found in the oath which archbishops were obliged to take on receiving

⁸ DUCHESNE, *op. cit.*, p. 390, footnote.

⁹ ROHAULT DE FLEURY, *La Messe*, vol. viii, pp. 49-50. Paris, 1889.

¹⁰ Cfr. MARRIOTT, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹¹ See HEFELE, *Beitrage zur Kirchengeschichte*, vol. ii, p. 217. Tübingen, 1864.

the pallium, which was similar in form to that now used, thus emphasizing intimate union with the Holy See.¹²

In WILKINS, vol. II, p. 109, may be found the form of oath taken by a pre-Reformation Archbishop of Canterbury on receiving "the pallium taken from the body of blessed Peter," which means the plenitude of the pontifical office.

The formula of application for the pallium made at the present day is essentially the same as it was in pre-Reformation times:

I, N. elect of the Church of N. petition urgently, more urgently, most urgently, that there may be conceded and transmitted to me a pallium taken from the body of the blessed Peter, in which is the fulness of the pontifical office.

An explanation of the connection of the pallium with the plenitude of the pontifical office must indubitably be ascribed to a practice which arose in the Middle Ages:

From an early period the woolen bands which the Pontiff was to confer as a mark of his confidence and affection, were laid for a night upon the tomb of the holy Apostle, previous to their being transmitted to their recipients. In this way they had become, it was considered, true relics. For one night, at least, St. Peter had slept under the shelter of this garment. The pallium was now his cloak, and just as Elias, carried up to heaven in the fire chariot, had left his mantle behind in the hands of his disciple Eliseus, in token of his succession to the powers of the prophetic office, in the same way, the reception of "the pallium taken from the body of blessed Peter" was the indispensable condition for the exercise of the pastoral functions conferred by him to whom it was said: "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." Moreover there was an especial appropriateness in the nature of the garment itself. It was woven of pure wool, it was laid upon the shoulders, it was marked with a cross. Even as far back as the days of Isidore of Pelusium in the fifth century, the idea was current in the Eastern Church that the OMOPHORION betokened the lost sheep carried home upon his shoulder; and by St. Germanus of Constantinople (715) and other writers in the East and the West this thought was preserved and developed.¹³

A document of special significance regarding the duties and obligations imposed upon archbishops by the reception of the pallium comes to us from

¹²See MANSI, *Coll. Concil.*, xv, 401 seqq. and WILKINS, *Concilia*, *passim*.

¹³THURSTON, in *The Month.*, July, 1892. Cfr. *Schriften und Reden von Joannes Cardinal von Geissel, Erzbischof von Köln, herausgegeben von KARL THEODOR DUMONT*, vol. i, pp. 105, seq.

the early days of the ninth century. Its authorship is ascribed to Amalarius Metensis, a bishop sent by Pope Gregory IV to the Emperor, Louis the Mild. It is reproduced by Marriott¹⁴ and part of it is here transcribed.

Pallium archiepiscoporum super omnia indumenta est, ut lamina in fronte solius pontificis. Illo decernitur archiepiscopus a caeteris episcopus. Pallium significat torquem, quem solebant legitime certantes accipere. Quo dono admonentur caeteri ad legitimum certamen. Quod habet duas lineas a summo usque deorsum ante et retro. Significat enim summae doctrinae decorem per disciplinam mandatorum Domini acceptabilem. Circulus circa collum, disciplina est Domini circa sermonem praedicatoris; ut non sit alter sermo praedicationis, et aliud opus, dicente Paulo, *Nemini dantes ullam offensionem, ut non vituperetur ministerium nostrum*. Quod ita Ambrosius in tractatu epistolae ad Corinthios; *Vituperatur enim ministerium nostrum, si ea quae verbis docebant, operibus suis, ut fierent, exempla non darent*. Mandata Veteris Testamenti, a principio Geneseos usque finem, in humerali linea operando et docendo portet pontifex: in pectorali Novi, a primitiva ecclesia usque in finem. De torque dicebat Salamon in parabolis, *Ut addatur gratia capiti tuo, et torques collo tuo*.

Special care is given to the preparation of the material of which the pallium is fabricated. Part of the wool from which palliums are woven is taken from two lambs presented annually to the Pope as a tax by the Lateran Canons Regular, the remainder is specially selected. There is considerable divergence among writers as to the manner in which the wool is secured and prepared; but the most satisfactory account seems to be that found in Chandlery.¹⁵

Every year on the feast of St. Agnes, January 21, the ceremony of the Blessing of the Lambs takes place in the Church of St. Agnes [on the *Via Nomentana*]. Two lambs are brought into the Church in separate baskets, resting on damask cushions, with their legs tied in red and blue ribbons, and thus laid upon the altar. The blessing is given by the Abbot of the Canons Regular of the Altar, the choir meanwhile singing the antiphon, *Stans a dextris ejus agnus nive candidior*. The blessing finished, they are delivered to the master of ceremonies of the Lateran Basilica, who takes them to the Vatican to present them to the Pope. The Holy Father sends them to the nuns of the Convent of *St. Cecilia in Trastevere*, whose property they become. About Easter they are shorn of their white fleeces, and the wool is presented to the Pope who has it woven into pallia which are blessed on the vigil

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 102.

¹⁵ *Pilgrim Walks in Rome*, 2nd ed., p. 263. London, 1905.

of the Feast of St. Peter and Paul and then placed in an urn in the Confession of St. Peter's Basilica, over the tomb of the Apostle.

By a constitution of Benedict XIV, issued in 1748, the palliums are to be blessed, if possible, by the Pope himself after Vespers sung on the vigil. Formerly they were taken to the sacristy of St. Peter's until wanted. Their being placed in a silver-gilt urn in the closest proximity of St. Peter's tomb was possibly suggested by the words of the form used in conferring the pallium: *Tradimus tibi pallium de corpore beati Petri sumptum*—"We confer upon thee the pallium taken from the body of the blessed Peter."¹⁶

An Archbishop-elect must *postulate* the pallium by a *mandatarius*, or agent usually an ecclesiastic of distinction. He promises to convey it to its destined recipient with the greatest possible dispatch. He engages not to rest for more than one night upon the journey, unless necessity compels him to do so. Should he be obliged to delay upon the journey, he must take care that the pallium be kept in a place of safety, if possible in a Cathedral church. Occasionally the transportation of the pallium to distant parts is attended with serious difficulties and at times unfortunate mishaps. Perhaps the most notable instance of this occurred in connection with the conveying of the pallium to the first Archbishop of Baltimore, Most Rev. John Carroll. It was entrusted to Bishop Concannen, first Bishop of New York, by Pius VII, and it did not reach its destination for three years. Bishop Concannen left Rome for America on June 3, 1808; but as Napoleon I held all the Italian seaports under blockade, the Bishop could not reach his diocese. He died at Naples, where he had gone in the hope of sailing for the United States, June 19, 1810. The documents in his possession were left in charge of a layman, but copies had previously been made. American Church historians differ as to which set of documents reached Archbishop Carroll. He certainly had copies of the Bulls for the consecration of Bishops, Cheverus, Flaget, and Egan, who were consecrated in Baltimore in the autumn of 1810. It is beyond our scope to enter into the question as to the bearer of them. Shea states¹⁷ that the pallium did not reach Archbishop Carroll until a later date: "On the 18th of August [1811] Dr. Carroll, who had hitherto been Archbishop-elect, was invested with the pallium, which was at last brought to Baltimore by the British Minister to the United States."

An Archbishop does not enjoy the *plenitudo pontificalis officii* until he is in actual possession of the pallium; thus, he cannot perform the pontifical functions of consecrating or ordaining, but he can delegate others to perform them. The *Pontificale* outlines his duties and expressly permits him to celebrate High Mass, but with the curious restriction that he must

¹⁶ See MUHLBAUER, *Decreta Authentica Congregationis SS. Rituum*, vol. ii, pp. 594 seq.

¹⁷ *Life and Times of Archbishop Carroll*, p. 653. New York, 1888. not wear the sandals. After the reception of the pallium he can use it only during solemn High Mass within the limits of his own diocese, or province, and the number of feasts on which it may be used is specified. The Pope

can, of course, make exceptions to these rules, and some such are on record. Thus the Patriarch of Constantinople was permitted to use the pallium at the funeral of the Emperor and at that of other dignitaries. Leo IV granted special privileges regarding its use to Hincmar, of Rheims, and Agapetus II permitted Bruno, of Cologne, to wear the pallium every day while saying Mass.

Without special privilege the only case in which the pallium can be worn outside the church is when the crowd of worshippers is so great as to necessitate Mass being sung in the open air, such as may happen during a Eucharist Congress or similar event.

The pallium is buried with its possessor at death. This rule is so rigid that in the event of an archbishop being drowned at sea and his body cannot be recovered, it is provided that the pallium is not to be given to his successor, but must be either buried in the ground, or burned. It expresses such a personal relation between the pope and the archbishop elected to a particular province that it is forbidden for one archbishop to lend his pallium for the use of another. Should the archbishop be translated to another see or a second archbishopric be conferred upon him in addition to the first, he must make an application for a second pallium, and then he is to be buried with the pallium which belongs to the province in which he dies. The other must be rolled up and laid under his head.¹⁸

Occasionally, in recognition of very distinguished and meritorious service, the pallium is conferred upon bishops. Thus, in 1851, it was bestowed by Pius IX on the Bishop of Marseilles. Again, in 1875, the Prince-Bishop of Breslau, Heinrich Förster, received it in commemoration of the jubilee of his priesthood, and still more recently, Leo XIII bestowed it upon Mgr Faict, Bishop of Bruges, in West Flanders.¹⁹

The present form of the pallium differs somewhat from that found in early days, of which there are examples in the mosaics at Ravenna. In the sixth century, it was a long, wide, white band, ornamented at its extremities with a black or dark red cross, and having tassels at the end. It was worn draped around the neck, shoulders, and breast in such a manner that it formed a V in front and the ends hung down from the left shoulder, one in front and one behind. In the eighth century it became customary to let the ends fall down, one in the middle of the back and the other in the middle of the breast, and to fasten them there with pins, the pallium thus becoming Y-shaped. The present circular form dates probably from the eleventh century. The two vertical lappets of the circular pallium were very long until the fifteenth century, but were repeatedly shortened until they are now about twelve inches in length. In early times the only decoration on the pallium consisted of two crosses near the ends; the additional crosses were added during the Middle Ages, but their number was not

¹⁸ Cfr. MUHLBAUER, *Decreta Authentica Cong. SS. Rituum*, vol. ii, pp. 594, seq., and BRAUN, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, sec. iv, ch. iii, n. 8. Freiburg, 1907.

¹⁹ See *The Month*, July 1892.

definitely fixed or the color of them determined, though they were usually of a dark red or purple color. The addition of small leaden weights was usual as early as the thirteenth century. The pallium as we find it to-day is a circular band of white wool about two inches wide, having two lappets about twelve inches long which are weighted with small pieces of lead covered with black silk, so that they may hang in the proper position. It has six crosses of dark purple color, and is worn over the chasuble.